

EXHIBIT I

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Netflix's 'Baby Reindeer' review: One of the most brilliant and upsetting shows of 2024

Painful to watch, but impossible to look away from.

By [Sam Haysom](#) on April 16, 2024

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Credit: Ed Miller / Netflix

From its opening sequence you could be forgiven for thinking [Baby Reindeer](#) was a comedy.

Set in a London police station, we watch as Donny Dunn (creator Richard Gadd, playing a version of himself), shuffles into reception to tell a disinterested officer he's being stalked. A woman Donny met in the pub where he works has been following him and sending him hundreds of emails a day.

"Are any threatening towards you?" asks the officer of the emails.

"Yeah," says Donny, holding up his smartphone to show a message that reads, "I jusst had an egg."

"I wouldn't say that's...particularly threatening," comes the confused response.

It sounds light-hearted enough, but there's a current running beneath the scene. A mixture of awkwardness and fear. The comedy in *Baby Reindeer*, in this way, is like a thin sheet of ice. It masks something darker and more dangerous churning just below the surface.

What's *Baby Reindeer* about?

Adapted from his [one-man play of the same name](#), Gadd's limited series is based on his own life. We first meet his protagonist, Donny, when he's in something of a rut, working shifts in a London pub while struggling to make a name for himself as a standup comic.

Donny's private life is more complicated than his professional one. He's living with the mother of his ex-girlfriend and dating a trans woman, Teri (Nava Mau), a relationship he's trying to keep secret due to his own confusion about his sexuality. To make things worse, Donny randomly shows kindness to a stranger called Martha (Jessica Gunning), only for her to latch on to him in a way that goes from endearing to terrifying in the blink of an eye.



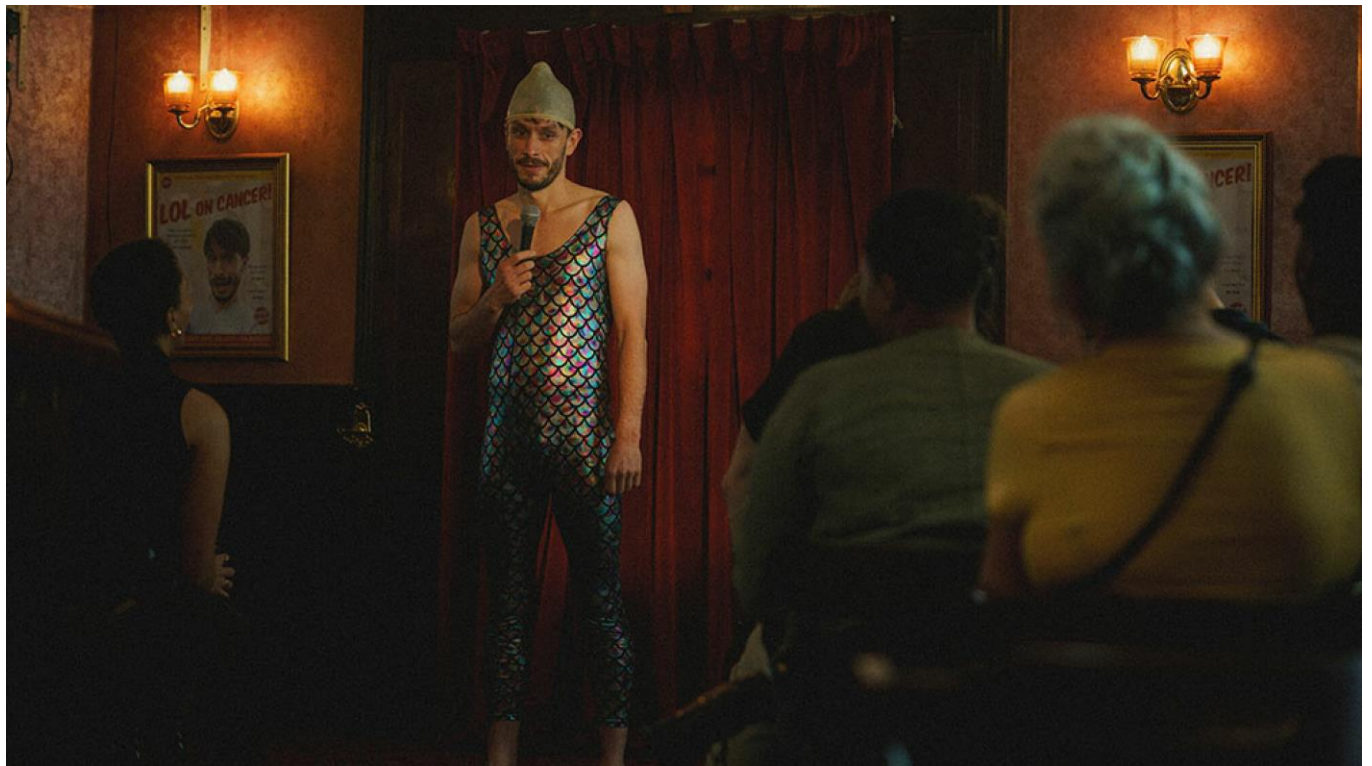
Dunn first meets Martha when he gives her a free cup of tea. Credit: Ed Miller / Netflix

"I have a sneaky feeling you might be the death of me," whispers Martha at the end of the first episode, shortly after asking Donny if he ever wishes he could unzip people and climb inside them. Like many of their early interactions, it's a comment that would be amusing if it wasn't so unnerving.

***Baby Reindeer* is often hard to watch.**

Gadd's series is by turns hilarious, harrowing, tense, uplifting, and upsetting. It's difficult to categorise. Perhaps the only thread running throughout the seven episodes is just how uncomfortable things are. The viewing experience is painful, for multiple reasons. For the most part it's the show's honesty. Donny's standup performances are exactly what you'd expect from a struggling comedian: awkward to watch. He's often met with silence, sometimes heckles. More than once the person shouting from the audience is Martha herself, and the resulting exchanges — which, like the script as a whole, feel horribly realistic — make you want to curl up into a ball.

Martha is a character that's so well drawn, and so brilliantly acted by Gunning, that she's difficult to look away from. At times she's like [Kathy Bates in Stephen King's *Misery*](#), exploding with an anger and violence that makes you recoil; at other times she merely seems like an odd and slightly pitiful figure, making us feel the same sympathy for her that Donny himself struggles with. There's a scene early on where Donny, while trying to get to the bottom of who Martha really is, follows her home to her messy one-bedroom flat and peers in at her through the window. Of course he makes a noise and she spots him before he can fully duck down, and there's another misspelled email waiting for him when he gets home: "babyr ein i saw you looking, ickle wickle peeping tom." Like many instances in the show, whenever Donny tries to take some sort of action to help himself, it ends up backfiring horribly.



Dunn's standup performances make for painful viewing. Credit: Ed Miller/Netflix

But the storyline with Martha, however troubling it is to watch, is only one disturbing facet in the show. Affecting Donny's interactions with his stalker and the way he feels about himself is an incident that happened to him years before, which is told over the course of a longer flashback episode midway through the season. It's very uncomfortable viewing, reminiscent of [Michaela Coel's brilliant *I May Destroy You*](#), but it serves to reveal more about Dunn's psychology. Gadd, once again basing the story on his own experiences (this time something eluded to in another of his shows, *Monkey See Monkey Do*), gives a phenomenally raw performance.

***Baby Reindeer* has some moments that will stay with you.**

It's difficult to find fault with *Baby Reindeer*. The acting is brilliant across the board, Gadd's writing is excellent, and the only thing that might put some people off is the darkness of the subject matter. The show is raw and honest, and the characters don't always make the decisions we want them to make.

The show has moments that will stay with you; little awkward vignettes, some real-life horror, and a few sequences that are powerful enough to hurt. There's one particular scene near the end of the series that takes place on the standup stage, a soul-bearing monologue that's about as heart-wrenching as it's possible for TV to get.

In the end, though, nothing is neat. This isn't the type of show with a clear resolution. It's messy, thought-provoking, and — like a dream that's difficult to shake — you'll find your mind going back to it long after the credits have rolled.

How to watch: [Baby Reindeer is now streaming on Netflix](#).

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